

Disability Benefits

The VA administers two disability programs. Both pay monthly benefits to disabled veterans.

- **Disability Compensation:** The VA can pay you compensation if you are at least 10% disabled as a result of your military service.
- **Disability Pension:** The VA can pay you a pension if you are a war-time veteran with limited income, and you are no longer able to work or are age 65 or older.
- **Time Limits:** There is no deadline for applying for disability benefits.

If you have any questions about VA Health Care, Compensation or Pension benefits please contact the

**St Joseph County Service Officer
269-467-5557**

Services Available From the VA

Requesting Military Discharge

Michigan Veterans Trust Fund

Vocational Rehab & Employment

Education & Training Benefits

Health Care Benefits

Disability Benefits

Burial Benefit

Home Loans

Life Insurance

Address Change



Gulf War Veterans



For VA benefit purposes, Gulf War service is active military duty in any of the following areas in the **Southwest Asia theater of military operations** at any time during the first Gulf War starting August 2, 1990 through the Iraq War. This includes Veterans who served in Operation Iraqi Freedom (2003-2010) and Operation New Dawn (2010-2011).

- Iraq
- Kuwait
- Saudi Arabia
- The neutral zone between Iraq and Saudi Arabia
- Bahrain
- Qatar
- The United Arab Emirates (U.A.E.)
- Oman
- Gulf of Aden
- Gulf of Oman
- Waters of the Persian Gulf, the Arabian Sea, and the Red Sea
- The airspace above these locations

Military Service Connection

Veterans may be eligible for disability compensation if they have a service-related disability and were discharged under other than dishonorable conditions.

VA has recognized medically unexplained illnesses (popularly called "Gulf War Syndrome") and certain infectious diseases as associated with military service in the Southwest Asia theater of military operations.

Eligibility Requirements

- *Diagnosed or undiagnosed conditions that appeared either during a qualifying period of active service or prior to December 31, 2016, to a degree of 10 percent or more must meet the following conditions:*
- There must be no other cause for your disability or illness than service in the Southwest Asia theater of military operations.
- If your disability or illness did not appear during active duty in the Southwest Asia theater of military operations, then it must have appeared prior to December 31, 2016, to a degree that is at least 10-percent disabling (for VA rating purposes).

The disability must have existed for 6 months or more, **AND** the disability must be one or more of the following:

- **Undiagnosed illnesses.** These are illnesses that may include but are not limited to: abnormal weight loss, fatigue, cardiovascular disease, muscle and joint pain, headache, menstrual disorders, neurological and psychological problems, skin conditions, respiratory disorders, and sleep disturbances.

- **Functional gastrointestinal disorders**, a group of conditions marked by chronic or recurrent symptoms related to any part of the gastrointestinal tract. Functional condition refers to an abnormal function of an organ, without a structural alteration in the tissues. Examples include irritable bowel syndrome (IBS), functional dyspepsia, and functional abdominal pain syndrome.

Chronic Fatigue Syndrome, a condition of long-term and severe fatigue that is not relieved by rest and is not directly caused by other conditions.

Fibromyalgia, a condition characterized by widespread muscle pain. Other symptoms may include insomnia, morning stiffness, headache, and memory problems.

Presumptive disorders will be considered to have been incurred in or aggravated by service even if there is no evidence of such disease during active service. With three exceptions (see asterisks), one of the following must have become manifest to a degree of 10 percent or more within 1 year of the date of separation from a qualifying period of active service:

- Brucellosis
- Campylobacter jejuni
- Coxiella burnetii (Q fever)
- Malaria* (if not 10 percent or more within one year of separation, may be 10 percent or more at a time when standard or accepted treatises indicate that the incubation period commenced during qualifying period of service)
- Mycobacterium tuberculosis* (no time limit)
- Nontyphoid Salmonella
- Shigella
- Visceral leishmaniasis* (no time limit)

WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I HAVE ONE OF THESE LISTED CONDITIONS

Please contact your County Veterans' Services Officer to set up an appointment to get your Service-Connected Claim started. They will help you complete all of the proper paper work required.

WHAT WILL I NEED?

Copy of your DD-214 (discharge)

Copy of Marriage License & Divorce Papers if you have been married more than once.

Social Security Numbers for your Spouse and Dependents

Private Medical Records
(Doctors' Name, Address, Phone Numbers)

VA offers eligible Veterans a free Gulf War Registry health exam to find possible long-term health problems related to Gulf War service.

- See more at: <http://www.publichealth.va.gov/>